Conservation News

Coles County Soil and Water Conservation District

6021 Development Drive, Suite 2, Charleston, IL 61920

Phone: (217) 345-3901 ext. 3 **Email: info@colescountyswcd.org**

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Volume 61 Issue 3

Teasel: A Rapidly Spreading Threat

As you travel along Illinois highways this time of the year, you may have seen a tall, spiny plant with big purple or white flowers. You might have even considered taking some seed or seed heads home to plant and use as an accent flower or for use in dried flower arrangements. PLEASE DON'T!! This invasive weed is spreading into our parks, public lands, pastures and open woodlands.

A blooming flowerhead of Common Teasel.

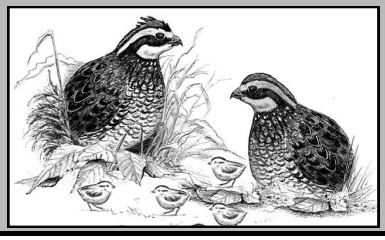
As noted by the Illinois Natural History Survey, this plant is a danger to our natural areas. "Teasel is an aggressive exotic species that has the capacity to take over prairies and savannas if it is allowed to become established. Lack of natural enemies allows teasel to proliferate. If left unchecked, teasel quickly can form large monocultures excluding all native vegetation." As a reminder, control of invasive species like teasel is required in acreage enrolled in programs such as CRP.

Teasel species produce large numbers of seeds and can easily colonize areas, displacing native plants. When a mature teasel plant dies it leaves a large dead area from its basal leaves, which becomes the nursery site for new seeds shed by the plant. Seeds have the capacity to be water-dispersed, which may allow seeds to be dispersed over longer distances by flooding. Immature seed heads of teasel are capable of producing viable seed, so simply mowing the infested areas can do more harm than good—increasing the spread of the plant. In fact, seeds clinging to roadside mowers is one of the ways the plant has spread so rapidly in Illinois. According to the Illinois Natural History Survey, the "rapid range expansion (of these invasive plants) probably was aided by construction of the interstate highway system."

Two teasel species are found in Illinois: common teasel and cut-leaved teasel. Common teasel blooms from June through October (pink or purple flowers), while cut-leaved teasel usually blooms July through September (white flowers). The unique flowers make teasel readily identifiable when blooming.

Please help stop the spread of teasel in our area. Management of teasel includes removing existing plants to prevent seed dispersion. Plants can be dug up and disposed of or several herbicides can be effective if plants are sprayed before flower initiation. For recommendations on controlling teasel on your land, please visit the Illinois Natural History Survey - Teasel website for more information. https://www.inhs.illinois.edu/research/vmg/teasel/

Upcoming Events:

July:	**August:**	**September:**
5th—Independence Day Observed	10th—Board Meeting	6th—Labor Day (Office Closed)
13th—Board Meeting		8th—Regenerative Grazing Field Day
15th—Nutrient Stewardship Field Day		9th—Pond Seminar
		10th—Fish Orders Due
		14th—Board Meeting

Delay mowing of roadsides and waterways from May 15th-Aug. 1st for ground-nesting birds… Don't Mow, Let Them Grow!

Photo Contest Winners

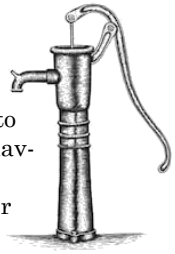
We received some really great submissions for this year's local Conservation Photo Contest. Congratulations to this year's winners: Dawn Cromwell, Donald Cromwell, and Lauren Spaniol! Dawn Cromwell secured first place in the "Ag/Conservation Across America" category with her submission "Last Glimpse." First place in the Close Up Conservation category was won with "Feast" by Donald Cromwell. Spaniol secured first place awards in Conservation in Action with her photo "Pollinator Protectors" and in Conservation Practices with "Cover Crop Close Up."

Honorable mentions go to Dawn Cromwell's photo "Perseverance" in Ag & Conservation Across America, Kathryn Bulver's photos "Beauty and the Beetle" in Close Up Conservation and "Lake Charleston Rip Rap Path" in Conservation Practices, and Sandra Cooper's "Hiding in Plain Sight" in Conservation in Action.

All local submissions also advanced to the state level competition, where two Coles County submissions won awards this year. At the state competition, Dawn Cromwell's photo "Serenity" placed in the Ag/Conservation Across America category and Sandra Cooper's photo "Hiding in Plain Sight" placed in Conservation in Action.

All of the photos can be viewed online at https://tinyurl.com/ysa7txta.

Well Water Programs



Nitrate levels have been rising in Illinois' drinking water. Shallow rural wells are particularly vulnerable to nitrate contamination. Nationally, 20% of these wells having exceeded the level considered safe by the U.S. EPA. Public water utilities are required to test their water for nitrate, but if you own your well it is up to you to make sure it is safe.

10-Contaminant Test Kits

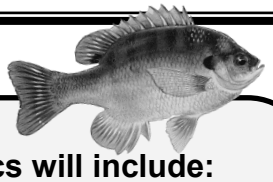
Finding high levels of nitrate in your water is an indicator that your well may be receiving surface water and is more likely to be contaminated with other chemicals. The Coles County SWCD sells well water test kits that test for 10 contaminates for only $30.

Abandoned Well Sealing

Abandoned wells pose a threat to public health since they provide a direct pathway for contaminants to enter groundwater. Groundwater is a source of drinking water for thousands of the people in the area, so protecting it is a priority. Additionally, they are dangerous! When abandoned wells are left open, children, animals or even adults can fall into them, causing injury or death.

The Coles County SWCD accepts applications for financial assistance to help offset the cost of having a well sealed whenever funds are available. Got an open well on your property? Give us a call! All residents within the Coles County Soil and Water Conservation District who have a well that is no longer in use are eligible to apply. Contact our office at 217-345-3901 ext. 3.

Pond Management Seminar



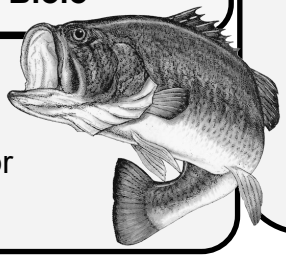
***WHEN: Thursday, September 9th, 5:30pm**

***WHERE: Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site Pond**

SPEAKER: Jimmy Garavaglia, IDNR Fisheries Biolo-

Topics will include:

Fish Management
Aquatic Plant Control
Fish Species Identification
Stocking Recommendations
Pond Construction
Pond Maintenance



Bring your questions and a lawnchair!

To RSVP for this **FREE** event call the Coles County SWCD (217) 345-3901 ext 3 or email info@colescountyswcd.org.

A map to the location can be found at https://goo.gl/maps/pCZ2CJGc5pNLM8yY8

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Kerry Bushue: Civil Engineering Tech.

As a cooperator of NRCS, SWCD must provide reasonable accommodations to USDA customers with disabilities, where appropriate. Individuals requiring reasonable accommodation for any NRCS or SWCD programs or services should contact Carzella Pritchett, Illinois NRCS' Disability Emphasis Program Manager, at (217) 353-6651 directly. Determinations on requests for reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis. USDA-NRCS/SWCD are an equal opportunity employer and provider.

Fall 2021 Fish Sale

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
Phone Number: _____
Email: _____
☐ Save a tree! I would like to receive the newsletter via email.

Please remind me prior to pick up via: ☐ Phone ☐ Email

Return with payment to: Coles County SWCD,
6021 Development Drive, Suite 2, Charleston, IL 61920

Important Dates:
Fish Orders Due: Friday, September 10th
Fish Pick Up: Wednesday, October 6th
10:00am at Coles Co SWCD Office

New pond? Suggested stocking rates:
Largemouth Bass: 30-50 per acre
Bluegill:150-250 per acre
Redear Sunfish: 200-250 per acre
Fathead minnows: 4-10lbs per acre
Channel Catfish: 25-100 per acre
Recommendations are for new ponds 1/2 acre +

Call our office or the IDNR fisheries biologist for restocking guidelines!

Office Use: Date Paid: _____ Amount: _____ Check#/Cash: _____

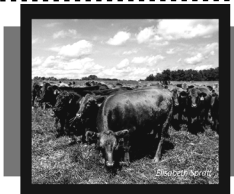
Fish Species	Size	Price	Quantity	Subtotal
Channel Catfish	4-6"	$1 each		$
	6-8"	$1.25 each		$
Largemouth Bass	3-4"	$1.25 each		$
Bluegill	2-3"	$1 each		$
	3-5"	$1.25 each		$
Hybrid Sunfish	2-3"	$1 each		$
	3-5"	$1.25 each		$
Red Ear Sunfish	3-4"	$1 each		$
Fathead Minnows	1-3"	$12 per lb		$
Triploid Grass Carp	8-11"	$12 each		$
See below				
		Total		$

TABLE MUST BE COMPLETED FOR ALL GRASS CARP ORDERS:

County	Township	Range	Section	Pond Size (Surface Acres)	Water Name	# of Fish
Ex: Coles	*T11N*	*R9E*	*16*	*12 ac.*	*Pond*	*4*

Are Your Fall Burn Plans Ready?

Most conservation programs require a burn plan and open burning permit to be on file prior to a controlled burn. Although the district doesn't write burn plans, our staff can connect landowners with an agency or technical service provider who does! Once a burn plan is obtained, we can assist with the application for an Illinois EPA open burning permit. Give us a call today to get the process started, before the last-minute rush in the fall!



REGENERATIVE GRAZING
FIELD DAY
AN ON-FARM FIELD DAY TO LEARN ABOUT REGENERATIVE GRAZING IN PRACTICE

Wednesday, September 8, 2021
8:30 am - 1:30 pm
Gays, IL | $30*

Learn best practices from graziers & experts!

Have you heard the buzz about regenerative grazing, but still wonder what it all means? We can help! Are you:

- a beef producer hoping to improve your environmental and economic outcomes?
- a row crop farmer looking for a herd to graze your cover crops, or looking to add livestock into your rotation?
- a landowner exploring additional revenue streams?

Join us for an on-farm field day that will provide you with a broad understanding of regenerative grazing. To learn more and **register**, visit www.thelandconnection.org/event/grazing-field-day.

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Farm Credit Illinois
Julie Crippin
Vice President, Ag Financial Services
321 N. Central
Paris, IL 61944
t: 217-465-7605
f: 217-463-3704
c: 217-799-4150
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